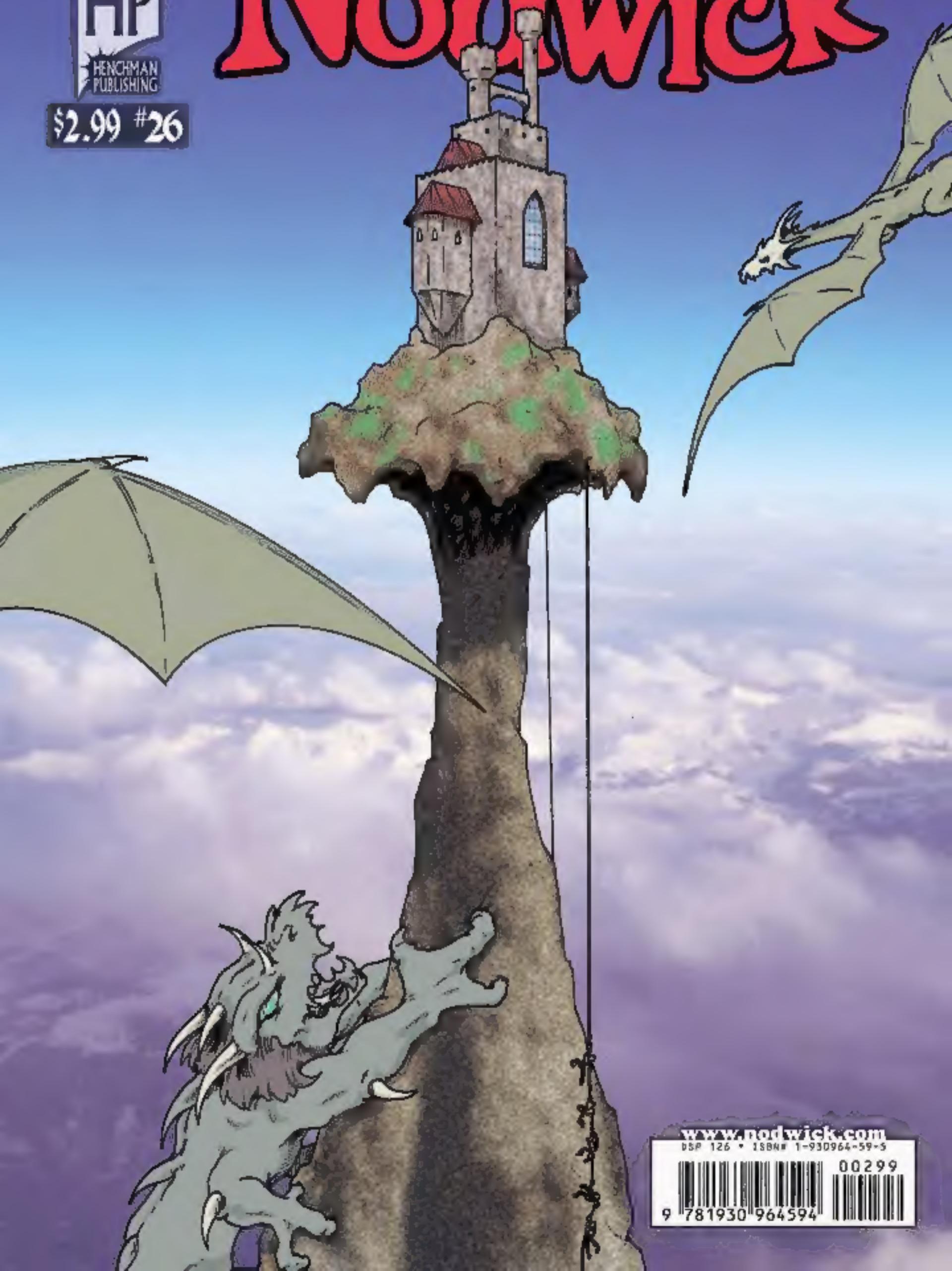




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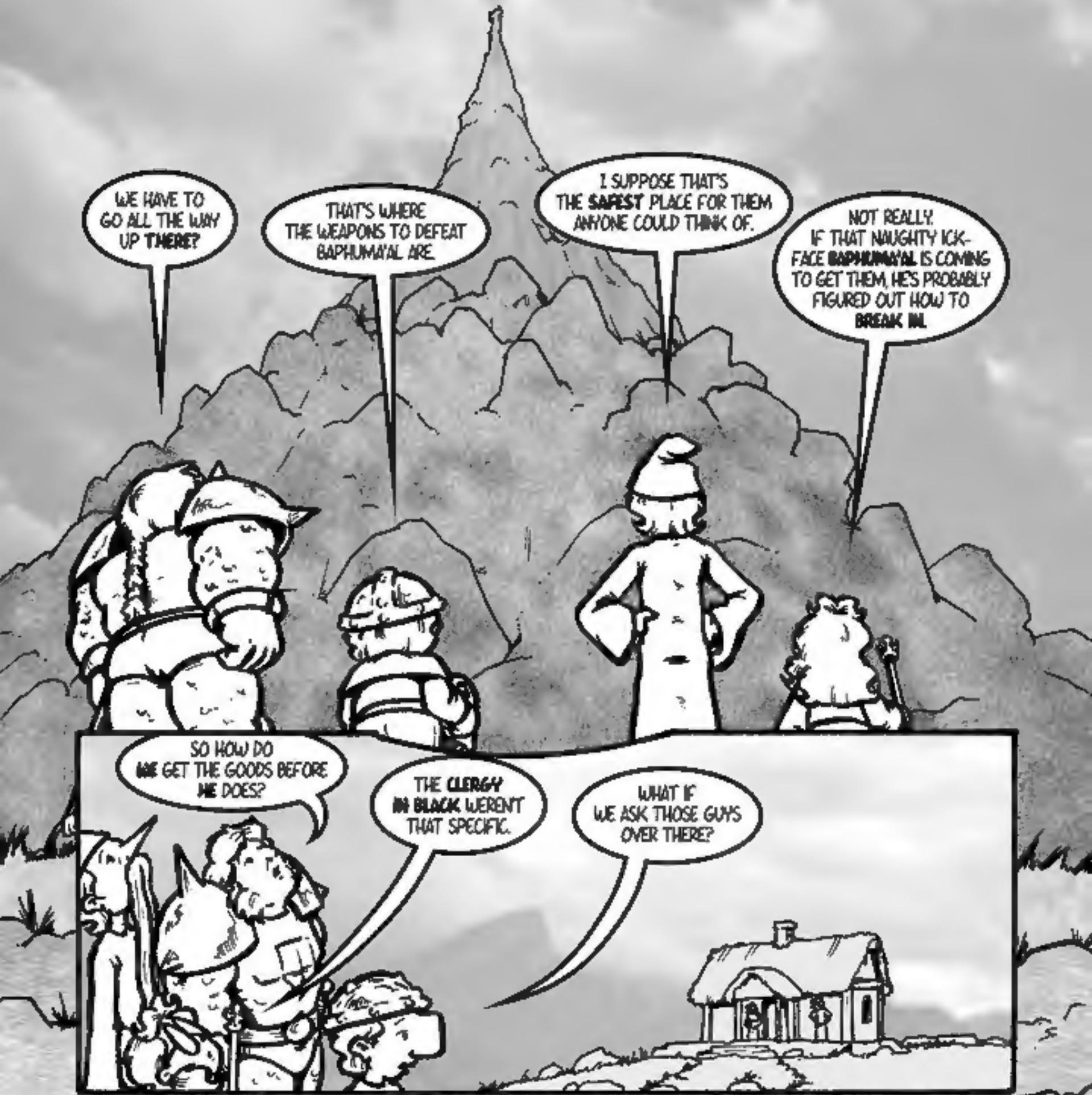
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Nodwick

by Aaron Williams



NODWICK #26 by Aaron Williams, October 2004. Distributed by Dork Storm Press, published by Henchman Publishing, 5545 Holmes St, Kansas City, MO 64110. Fax: (608)255-1342. E-mail: aaron@nodwick.com. Story and art ©2004 Aaron Williams. All rights reserved. No portion of this publication save for brief review excerpts may be reproduced without the express consent of the copyright holder. This is a work of fiction; any similarities to any actual persons or benchmarks save for the purpose of satire is purely coincidental. ADVERTISING: sales@DorkStorm.com. SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$26 per year. Please contact advertisingretail2@qwest.net, or call (651)488-2433 details. All letters to NODWICK assumed intended for publication unless otherwise stated, and become the property of the copyright holder. A mountain climber always wants to take one more peak. FIRST PRINTING, October 2004. PRINTED IN CANADA.



PLEASE
ENTER THE
HOLY
CRUCIBLE!

IT WILL
TRANSPORT
YOU TO THE
MOUNTANTOP,
WHERE OUR
MONASTIC FAMILY
WAITS FOR YOU.

HAVE
YOU EVER SEEN
ONE OF THESE,
AH, CRUCIBLES
BEFORE,
PIFFANY?

I DON'T
THINK SO.

IF WE'RE
GOING, WE'RE
GOING. LET'S
MOVE.

NOW
WHAT DO
WE DO?

PRAY THAT
YOU WON'T REVISIT
ANYTHING YOU HAD
FOR LUNCH.

SAY 'HI'
TO EVERYONE
FOR US!

SAY, DID THEY
EVER ACTUALLY AGREE TO JOIN OUR
MONASTIC ORDER?

COME TO THINK OF IT,
THEY NEVER MENTIONED SIGNING ON.
OH, WELL, I HOPE THEY LIKE THE VIEW.
THEY'LL BE SEEING IT THE REST OF
THEIR LIVES.

CAN YOU LEND ME
A HAND WITH CRANKING THE
SPRING BACK AND GATHERING
MATERIALS FOR ANOTHER
HELLO-GAZEBO?

WHY BOTHER? WE'RE
SUPPOSED TO CLOSE DOWN SHOP
ANYWAY. I THINK I'LL MOVE SOMEWHERE
AROUND SEA LEVEL FOR MY RETIREMENT.
HOW ABOUT YOU?





C-CLACK!





HOOH, HOLD ON THERE!
THE LAST TIME I JOINED ANY
KIND OF RELIGIOUS OUTFIT, IT WAS
RIGHT AFTER A WEEKEND WHEN I HAD
MY FIRST MAJOR BENDER. IT WAS
FOLLOWED BY EVENTS THAT I VAGUELY
RECALL INVOLVING A SHERIFF, A COA,
TWO TAVERN WENCHES, AND A
CHANDELIER.

I'M NOT ABOVE
DESTROYING ANOTHER MONASTERY TO
GET OUT OF IT AGAIN.

WHAT HE
MEANS IS, WE'RE
HERE TO GET THE
WEAPONS AWAY FROM
BAPHUMAAL'S FORCES,
NOT TO JOIN UP
WITH YOUR NOBLE
ORDER.

OH, WELL, I'M AFRAID
YOU'RE STUCK HERE WHETHER YOU
LIKE IT OR NOT. YOU SEE, THERE'S NO WAY
DOWN AT LEAST, NOT SAFELY... AND NOBODY AT
THE GROUND LEVEL HAS EVER REPORTED ANY
SUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS TO LEAVE OUR
CLOISTERED HOME.

SO YOU
GUYS HAVE
BEEN HERE
YOUR WHOLE
LIVES?

A FEW, BUT
MANY OF US VOLUNTEERED
TO BE HERE. WE DEVOTE
OURSELVES TO GUARDING THE
ARTIFACTS THAT COULD SAVE
THE WORLD. NONE THAT I
KNOW OF EVEN
WANT TO LEAVE.
NOT THAT WE
COULD.

THIS
PLACE CERTAINLY
SEEMS SAFE. I
DON'T SEE HOW
BAPHUMAAL
COULD TAKE THE
WEAPONS EVEN
IF HE WANTED
TO.

HOW ARE THE
FORCES OF GOOD SUPPOSED
TO GET THEM WHEN THEY
NEED THEM?

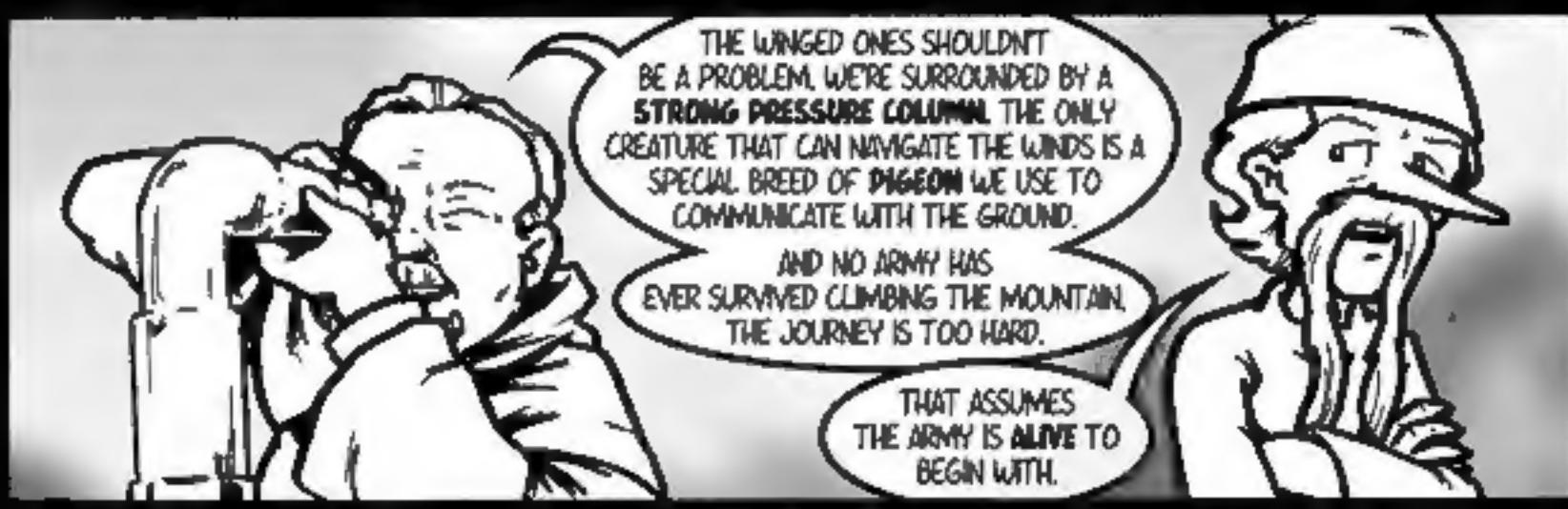
GOOD POINT.

I WANT TO GO
BACK TO THAT "NO WAY
DOWN" THING. SEE, I LEFT ALL OF
MY STUFF AT HOME, AND, WELL,
ALE JUST WON'T DRINK ITSELF,
YOU KNOW...

BAPHUMAAL
IS COMING HERE, THOUGH,
RIGHT?

THAT'S WHAT
I WAS TOLD. OR MAYBE
SOME OF HIS NOT-NICE
FRIENDS.

WHAT DO
THEY LOOK
LIKE?







MINUTES LATER, HOUR HEROES LOOK ON FROM THE RAMPARTS.

HERE THEY COME.

IT COULD BE WORSE.

HOW?

THERE COULD BE MORE OF THEM.

I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU HAVE ANY KIND OF DEFENSES AGAINST THIS KIND OF THING?

WE HAVE A CATAPULT.

A CATAPULT?

YES. THE LATE BROTHER DECIDUOUS BUILT IT IN AN ATTEMPT TO REACH THE GROUND.

DID HE?

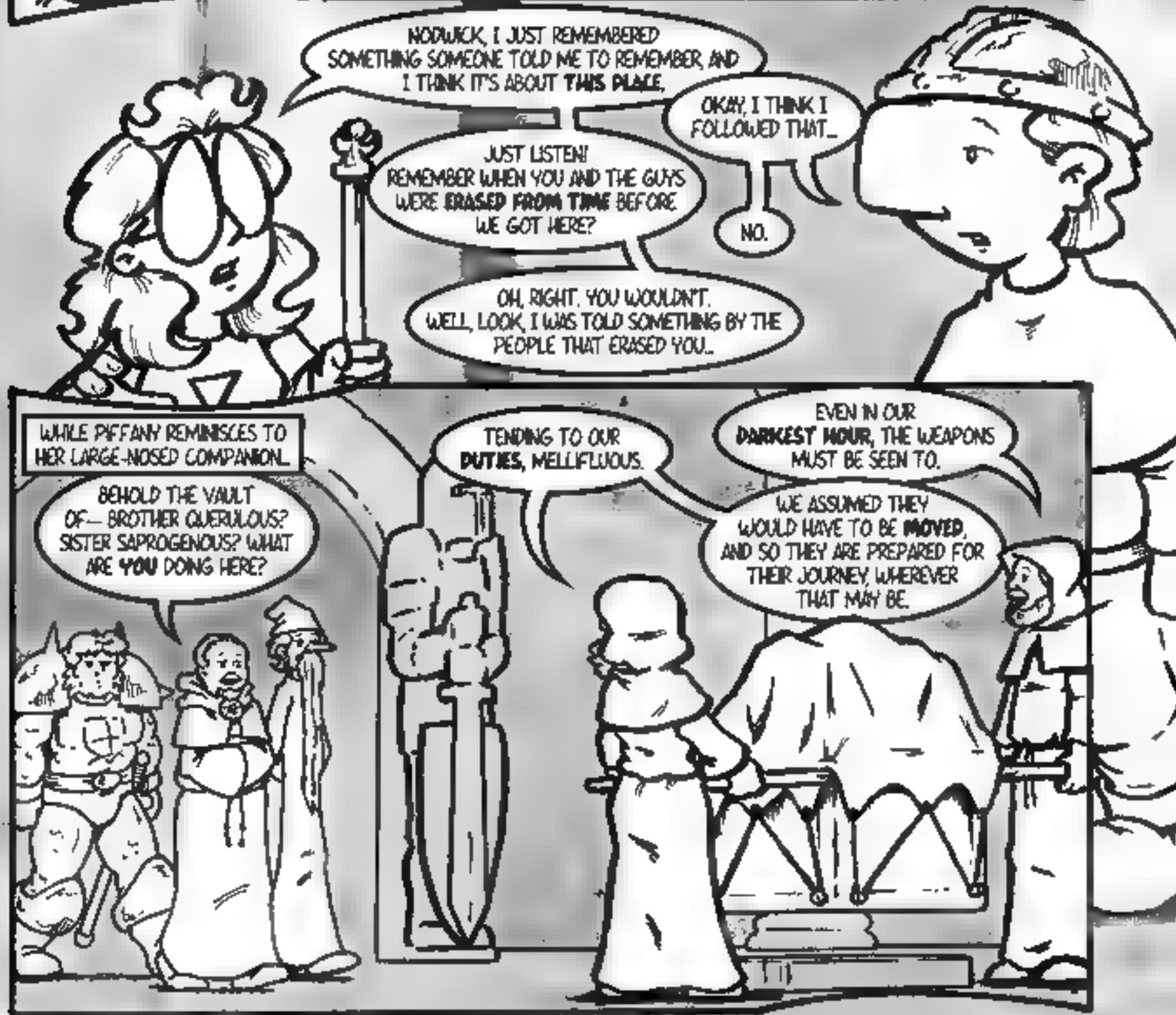
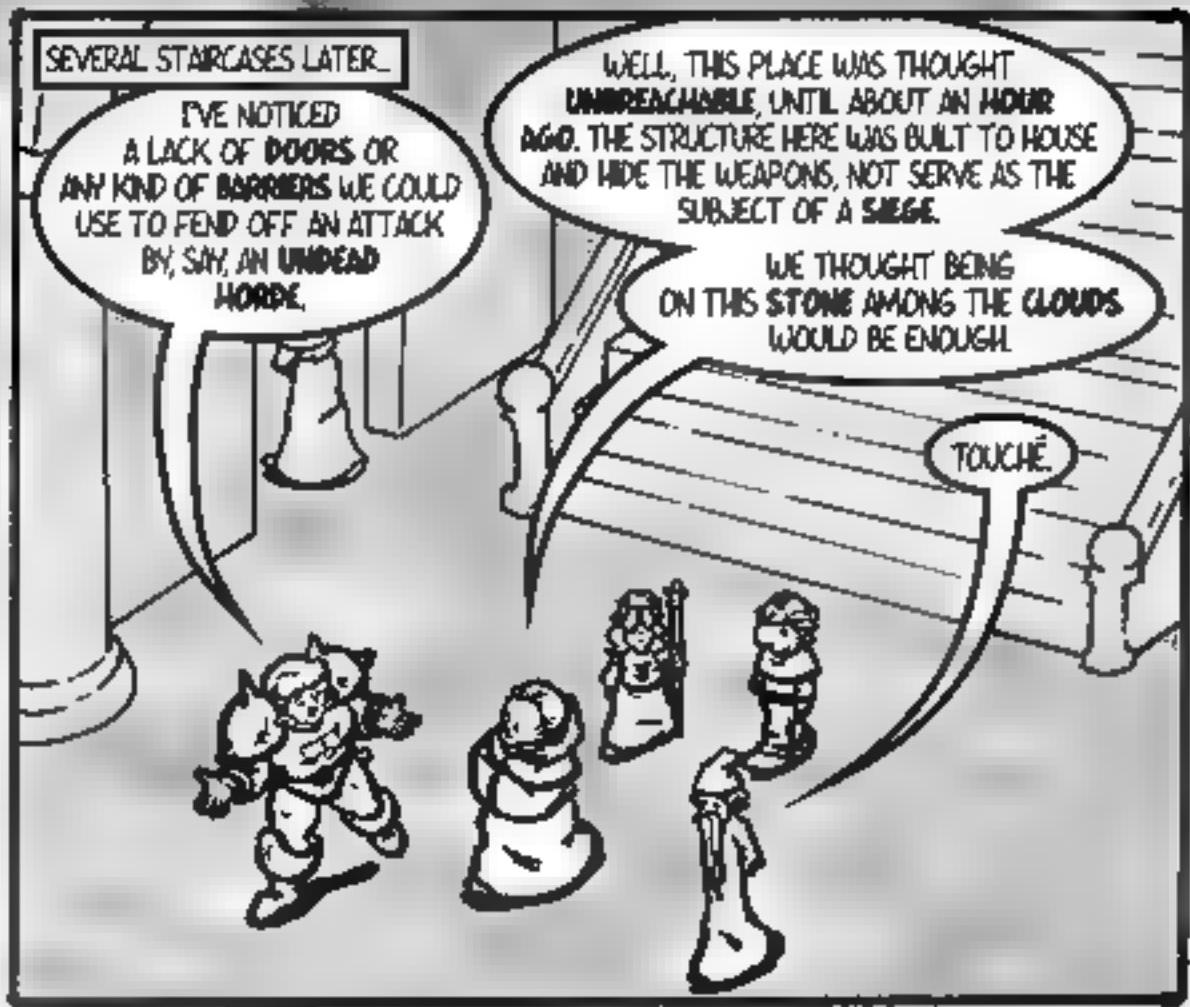
WE'RE NOT SURE. HE CREATED SOMETHING HE CALLED A "PARACHUTE" TO HELP SLOW HIS FALL, BUT IT SEEMED MORE TO HELPING HIM ASCEND TO GREATER HEIGHTS.

THIS DOESN'T LOOK HUNKY-DORY FOR THE HOME TEAM, PEOPLE.

PERHAPS IT'S A REALLY GOOD CATAPULT.

DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT I THINK THINGS JUST GOT A LITTLE MORE DIRE.

















HEY, YOU DNT
PAY FORTHTAT! IT'S GON
ON YER TAIL!

ABOUT A MINUTE LATER.

WHY AM
I THE FIRST
ONE TO TRY
THIS?

THANK
YOU FOR BEING
SO BRAVE,
NODWICK!

THE PRINCIPLE IS SIMPLE:
WE SHOOT YOU OVER THE EDGE OF
THE CLIFF. THE TOBOLINE SNAPS YOU BACK, AND
YOU'LL LAND AGAINST THE MOUNTAIN SIDE WITH
THESE WOODEN SLATS ON YOUR FEET. THE
HOOK IS DESIGNED TO DETACH
WHEN YOU HIT.

NOW, THE MOUNTAIN IS
MOSTLY SMOOTH ALMOST THE ENTIRE
WAY DOWN, SO YOU SHOULD BE FINE. WELL
BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU.

YEAGAR!
WHERE HAVE YOU
BEEN?

THERE! NOW
Y GOT MATCHIN'
LUGGAGE!

FWING!

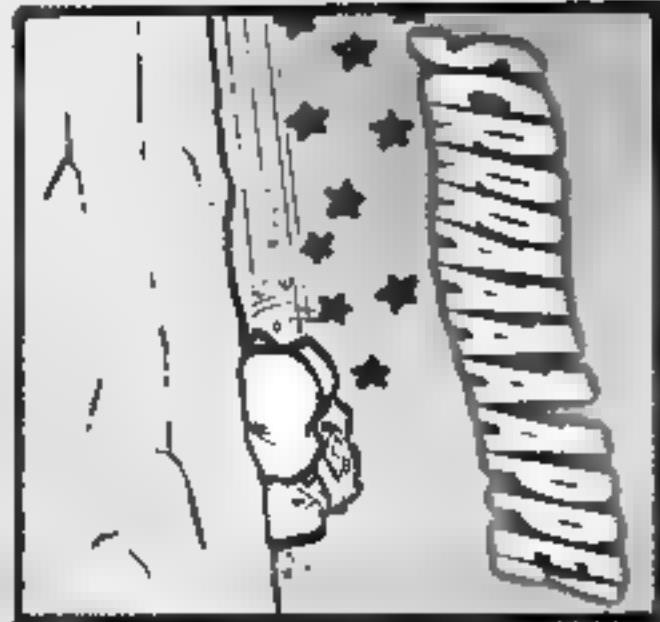
YEAGAR! YOU DIDNT
JUST HAND HIM THE OTHER BAG
OF WEAPNS, DID YOU?

NAH, I GIV 'IM
MUH EMPTYHS. RETURN F'R
DEPOSITSZ, YKNOW.

HMM. TH
WEAPNS LOOKIN A LOT LIKE
BOTTLES.

UH-OH.

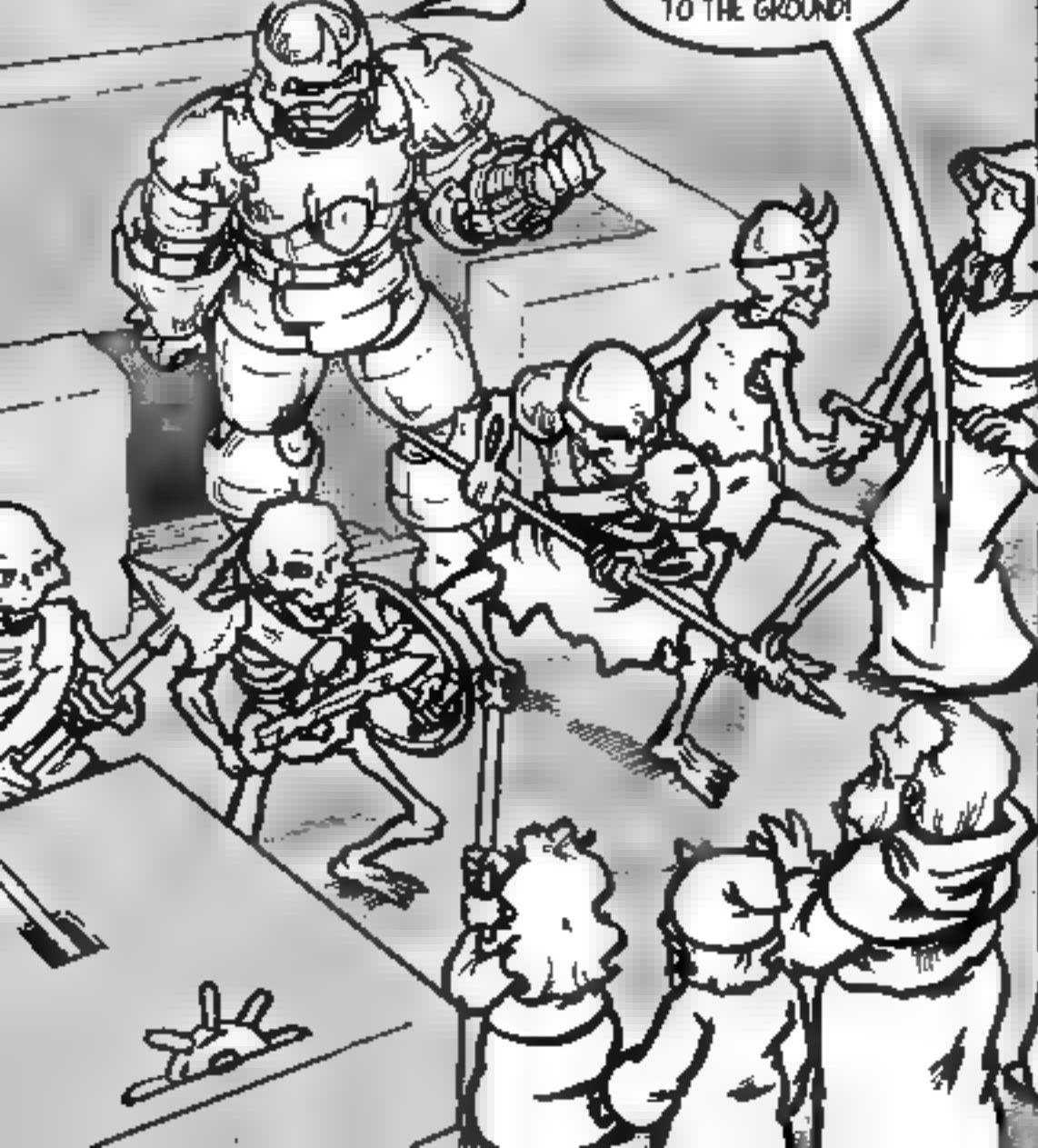
OUR HAPLESS HENCHMAN FLIES THROUGH HOSTILE SKIES...



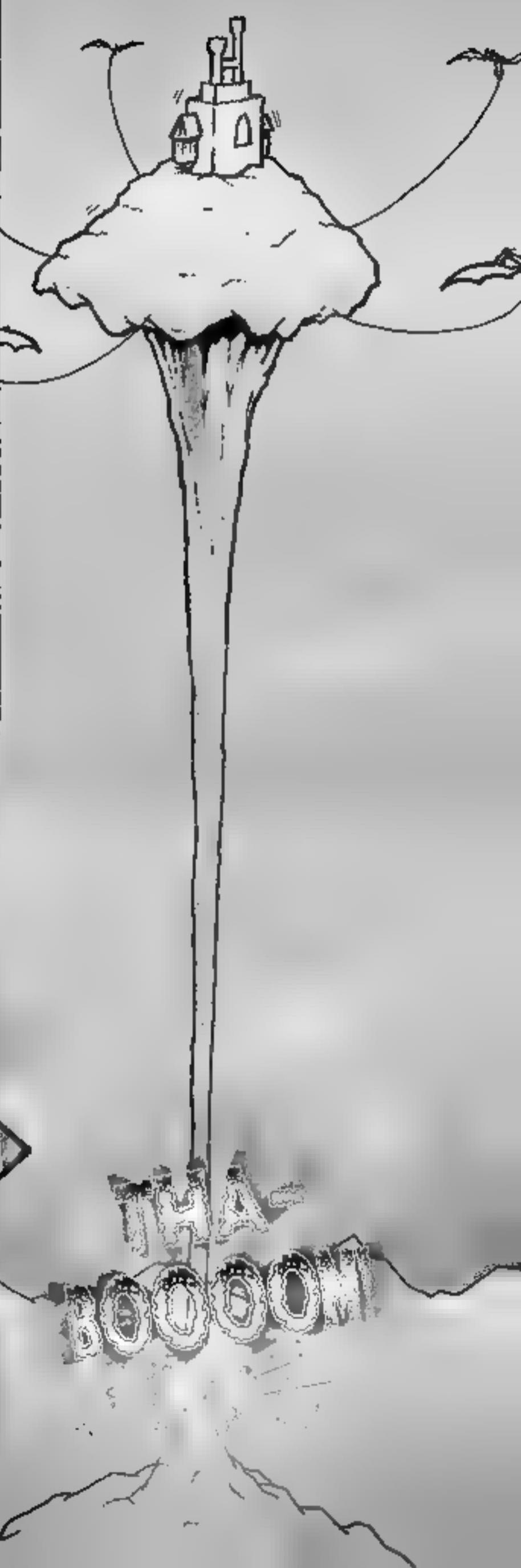
MEANWHILE, UNDEAD SOLDIERS HAVE TAKEN THE GREAT TOWER.

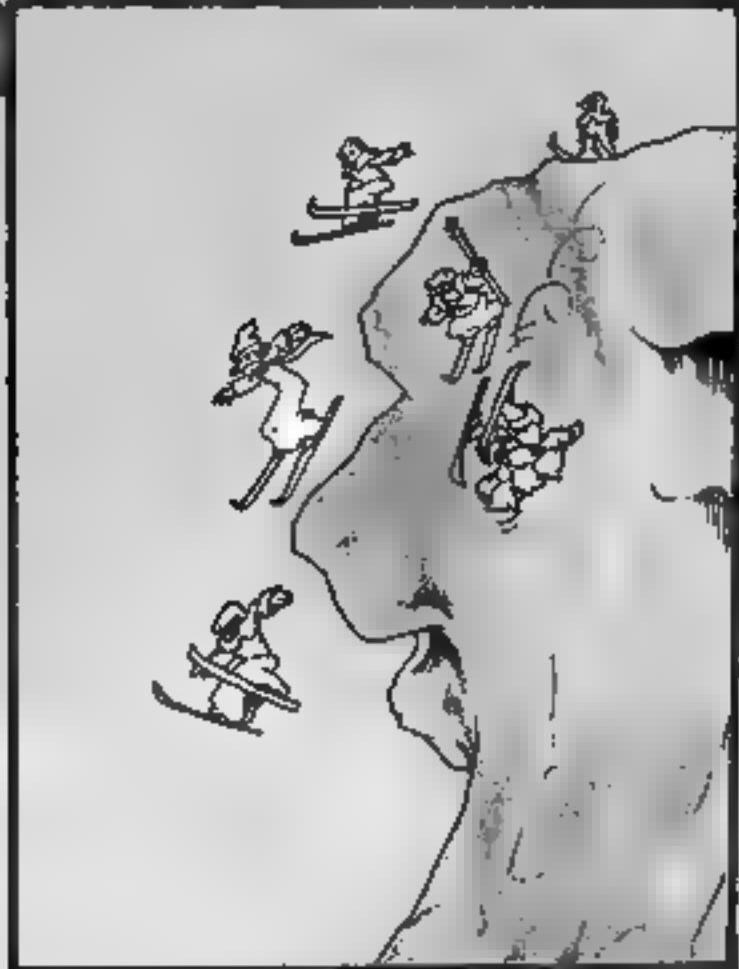
SURRENDERRR THE WEAPONZZZ

YOU'RE TOO LATE! AS WE SPEAK,
THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY TO THE GROUND!

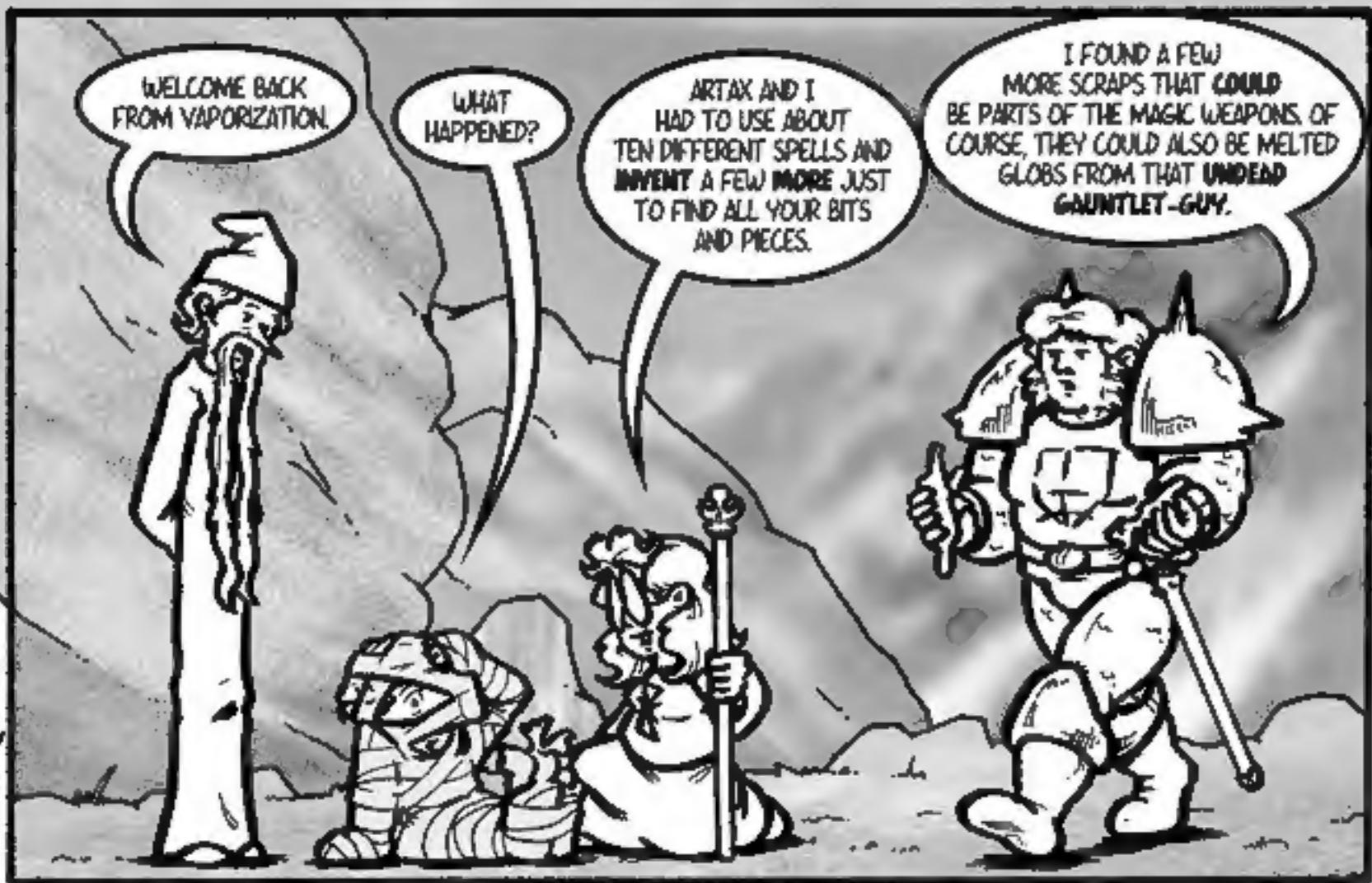












WE WANT TO APOLOGIZE.
WE HAD A JOB TO DO AND WE SEEM
TO HAVE MESSED IT UP.

WE WANTED LIVES. WE
JUST PICKED REALLY BAD SOLUTIONS
TO GETTING THEM.

AND I WAS BLIND TO
MY ACOLYTES' NEEDS.

SO WHAT
ARE YOU GOING TO DO
NOW?

WARN AS MANY
KINGDOMS AS WE CAN ABOUT
WHAT'S COMING. TRY TO RALLY
ENOUGH PEOPLE TO STAND AGAINST
BAPHUMATL, IF SUCH A THING
IS POSSIBLE.

WE'RE GOING
TO START WITH FLAT
PLACES FIRST.

I'D LIKE
TO WARN SOME
SEASIDE VILLAGES,
MYSELF...

WE'LL BE
SEEING YOU!

SO WHAT
ABOUT US?

I WANT
TO HEAD HOME
AND MAKE SURE
OUR TOWN IS
PREPARED.

I DOUTT BARF-O-MATIC
WILL EVEN GIVE OUR DUMP OF A TOWN
A SECOND LOOK.

I DON'T
KNOW. WE'VE
GIVEN HIM
ENOUGH REASON
TO TAKE AN
INTEREST
IN US.

WELL, YEAH, BUT IT'S
NOT LIKE WE'VE EVER DONE MUCH
TO HIM ON PURPOSE...

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